

264 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

' goaded the peasantry of the Western Lowlands into madness/ ¹ In a third passage, he is described as ' haunted by that consciousness of inexpressible guilt, and by that dread of a terrible retribution, which the ancient polytheists personified under the awful name of the Furies/ ² However, it is certain that Dundee was not profane or rapacious or merciless, and that the crimes attributed to him were mainly fables. The Scottish Whigs of the next generation put down to * bloody Clavers ' most of the acts of cruelty committed during the period of repression. Of the crimes to which Macaulay refers he gives five examples, but in three of them Claverhouse had no share whatever ; in the fourth he protested against the execution of the victim and endeavoured to save his life ; in the fifth case Macaulay misrepresents the statements of the authorities.

This fifth case is that of John Brown, ' commonly called the Christian Carrier/ whom Macaulay represents Claverhouse as arresting and sentencing to death on the sole ground of nonconformity, and not only condemning him, but in a fury shooting him dead with his own hand.

Macaulay's story is based on the narrative of Wodrow,³ which appeared in 1722, thirty-seven years after the event referred to. Some of the statements it contains are so absurd that Macaulay silently omitted or altered them.

There are two other accounts extant, both of which contradict the assertion that Claverhouse shot John Brown, and say that he had him shot by a file of soldiers, as he naturally would have done. Further it is quite clear, first, that Brown was not shot for nonconformity alone, inasmuch as, a year before, he had been summoned to give himself up as a

¹I, 492-8.

²IV, 1564 (xiii).

³ Robert Wodrow, The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland (1730), iv. 244-5.